

ALTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes

September 20, 2017

6:00 PM

1 Monument Square

Alton, NH 03809

Approved: October 2, 2017

Cydne Johnson convened the meeting at 6:00 PM and led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and a Monument of Silence. The following staff members were present:

Cydne Johnson, Chairwoman
Virgil MacDonald, Vice Chairman, excused absence
Philip V. Wittmann, Selectman
John Markland, Selectman
Reuben Wentworth, Selectman
Elizabeth Dionne, Town Administrator

Agenda Approval

Reuben Wentworth made a motion to approve the agenda and Phil Wittmann seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Public Hearing

- Highway Block Grant Funds; \$165,571.33

At this time, the Public Hearing was opened to the public for questions and/or comments. Roger Nelson, taxpayer from the Town of Alton approached the Board to comment on the rumor that he had been hearing about the purchase of another excavator. He felt that it would be sending a terribly wrong message to the public. We already have an excavator and to use this money to buy a second one is irresponsible; it should be used as it was intended for such as repairing bridges and fixing roads according to the grant that is being given.

The Public Hearing was closed.

Board of Health

Cydne Johnson made a motion to recess as the Board of Selectmen and to convene as the Board of Health and Reuben Wentworth seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Septic Waiver Request; Map 72 Lot 128, 20 Blueberry Lane

John Dever, Code Enforcement Officer was present and explained the waiver request for the property on Blueberry Lane located within Alton Shores. The property owner attended for any further questions, if necessary. The proposal is for the replacement of the existing cesspool, which is less than 50' to the lake. There is no holding tank; this predates any modern

system. The new system will be approximately 56' from the edge of Hills Pond this is in order to maintain a gravity drain from the house to the tank. The leach field will be 84' from the shore. This will be a major improvement and modernized from the current system.

Reuben Wentworth made a motion to approve the septic waiver request for Map 72 Lot 128, Tank/Pump Chamber to Lake, Required 75', Actual 55.96' and Cydney Johnson seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Cydney Johnson made a motion to adjourn as the Board of Health and re-Convene as the Board of Selectmen and Phil Wittmann seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Announcements

- The Town Clerk's Office will not be able to process motor vehicle registrations from Friday, October 6th through Friday, October 10th due to a software upgrade at the Division of Motor Vehicles.
- Town Offices will be open for regular business on Columbus Day, Monday, October 9th.

Appointments

Water Department Update

Courtney Mitchell, Water Commissioner was in attendance to give a status update from the Water Department. She provided the following information:

1. Executive Summary

The Water Department had a challenging yet successful year of operations while dealing with a transition period in the superintendent position. Courtney Mitchell has continued fulfilling duties of Chief Operator and overseeing treatment and distribution operations. Currently we have 3 members of the Board of Commissioners, Lou LaCourse and Brian Dubisz.

The Water Department received a Cross Connection Control Violation at the State level due to the turn-over of the old Superintendent. This was corrected and returned to compliance on January 10, 2017. A new procedure and record keeping program has been implemented to ensure compliance from that point forward. All lab testing and Monthly Operating Reports were completed to appropriate standards. All necessary records have been maintained and submitted.

2. Review Department Operations

The department maintained the same two full time staff members for the year as well as part time secretary. This year we re-enacted our Hydrant Flushing Program. This will take place bi-annually, in May and October. Hydrant flushing creates higher flow velocities to scour the pipes and ensures good water quality throughout the water system. In addition to the quality of the water, it also identifies deficiencies within the Fire Protection System and they are placed on a repair list. Two hydrants dating back to the 1940's were bagged and one is scheduled to be replaced with a new valve to be installed in October 2017.

Meters have been purchased for the summer lines, this will give us accountability in accuracy down to 2.5 gpm for our 2" summer line and 10 gpm in our 4" line. Containment is to be ordered and installed by our summer turn on dates. The summer lines have been a large part of our "leakage" We have identified these areas and replaced the lines. The leaks have been cut in half.

All of our deficiencies listed during a sanitary survey in 2015 were repaired. A Repco submersible transducer was installed by R.E. Prescott in our storage tank with retired the old system of a "red light" to indicate low levels. This transmitter measures liquid level through pressure sensing technology. The weight creates pressure on the transmitters measuring element. As the liquid level changes, the output changes and carries a signal to the well house for the well to turn on or turn off.

We were granted \$200,000 thru the NHDES State Revolving Loan Fund for Water Projects. Work is scheduled to begin on identified projects in June or 2018. This loan will be paid back in 30 years and will assist in infrastructure improvements thru rehabilitation of our storage facility, upgrades to our electrical system thru "SCADA communications" (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) This is a very important tool to the water system and its operations. This allows

organization to carefully study and anticipate the optimal response to measured conditions and execute those responses automatically every time. It is a precise tool for monitoring equipment and processes virtually eliminating human error. It is a tool used by most all treatment facilities. With this fund, we are also able to replace distribution pipes such as the Bay Bridge to resolve the degradation of the aging main.

Our operators have been very busy locating and inspecting water shut offs and main valves to ensure proper function on the streets identified by the Public Works Department to be reconstructed in 2018. In addition to valve location, we have steadily been making headway on past due billing. Part of this procedure is to locate and inspect water shut offs on properties with past due invoices. Customers are sent a final invoice, non-compliance results in a disconnect notice, 12 days after the issuance of the disconnect notice, the home is then placed on the disconnect list. Currently, The outstanding balance is \$28,555 down 10% from last year at this time and approximately a dozen homes are on the current disconnect list.

3. Water System Performance Data

On average, the Jones Field Pump is running an average of 12.5 hours per day at 262,500 gallons per day. We continue to treat with Caustic for pH and corrosion control and Sodium Hypochlorite for disinfection.

4. Review of Rate Setting

Not necessary for discussion at this time.

Courtney Mitchell stated that at this time they are in a much better position and thanked the crew at the Water Department for their hard work.

Reuben Wentworth questioned if the Water Commissioners have a licensed operator and what are the intentions for getting a current employee licensed. Courtney stated that it is currently up in the air. One of the qualified candidates was not able to pass the Grade II test, which is what you need to operate the system. Courtney is continuing to act as a contracted operator, overseeing operations. The Commissioners have been searching for a qualified candidate with hopes of getting someone in place next year. In addition, Reuben questioned building up the Capital Reserve Accounts for the department. Courtney responded that they are hoping to develop the fund. They are in a good position with 184K left in their yearly budget; they have been very frugal. The 200K revolving loan will have approximately a 7K yearly payback for 30 years, which will be in the best interest for the department. The tank needs to be inspected, there are some major wiring issues that need to be addressed and the Bay Bridge fix was only a bandaid project and needs to be repaired correctly. The consulting fees have been taken out of the upcoming budget which will free up roughly 12K; if we cannot find a qualified operator then she will continue with consulting; there cannot be an overlap. Rates will be considered if necessary.

Cydney Johnson thanked Courtney for allowing the Town to operate under her license and all the work that she has done to bring the department to its present position. In addition, Cydney asked if the staff was back to their full workload. Courtney responded 'no', one is still light duty, Tom is full duty. This has created some overtime issues with checking the pump house on the weekends for well readings; the Commission is discussing how to take care of this issue with upgraded equipment.

Public Input I (limited to 3 minutes per person on agenda items only)

Roger Nelson, Alton taxpayer approached the Board to discuss his recent tax assessment, which came in with a 46.5% increase from last year. He then stopped by the Assessor's Office to make an appointment and was not able to do so at the time. A few days later, he printed his assessment sheet and now it was down to 40.8%; this will result in a 1K increase. Again, he

called the office for an appointment with the window being closed until the third or fourth week of October. Yesterday he printed another assessment and it is down again to a 29.9% increase. He still can't get a meeting and he is unsure as to what is going on. He is turning to the Board for suggestions and noted he probably would have to file for an abatement. This will affect many others. Assessments are a bit strong!

Reuben Wentworth questioned the three (3) assessments within a period of two (2) weeks without seeing the Assessor.

Mr. Nelson noted that he is confused with these changes. The house assessment did not change it is the land assessment that has changed.

Cydney Johnson apologized for allowing Mr. Nelson to speak under Public Input I as she forgot to ask to which agenda item he would be speaking on therefore she allowed him to continue his input.

New Business

Primex; Property & Liability Contribution Assurance Program (CAP)

Liz Dionne explained that Primex is our current insurer for Worker's Comp and Property and Liability Insurance. They have a program called CAP and are offering it to the Town due to its recent low levels of claims under the Property and Liability portion of insurance. It is a contract for a 3-year period with an increase set with a CAP, which is currently set at a 9% maximum for each year. The nice thing is that you can plan accordingly for budgeting purposes. Last year's increase was around 8% +/- . Liz is hoping for the Board's approval for this. We are not offered the CAP program for our Worker's Comp insurance due to our claim level. There is no downside to this.

Cydney Johnson made a motion to enter into the CAP program for 2018 through 2020 and Phil Wittmann seconded.

Discussion: Reuben Wentworth stated that if Primex wanted to they could raise our rates up to 30K the first year, 30K the second year and 30K the third year and wondered how often the Town goes out to look for other insurance quotes. Other options have been obtained in the past finding Primex to be much lower. In addition, Reuben inquired about what safety programs are offered to Town employees. Liz Dionne responded that Primex offers a lot of safety and non-safety training both on site and off site and Webinar training. We also have a joint loss management committee, which meets quarterly (double what is required). Reuben stated he has concerns and a hard time entering into a 3-year contract at this high amount of money without at least asking for other quotes. Cydney Johnson noted that this does not mean it will be a 9% increase. Phil Wittmann asked how long ago was it that we had other quotes from other companies; Cydney was unsure but remembers that when we switched over to them there was a savings that was put back in. John Markland remembered discussion with the prior Administrator that we have very limited choices of carriers; Phil concurs. Municipalities don't have much choice with Primex being a risk pool for municipalities only; we are in a pool with the smaller based municipalities and we are not large enough to have

our own pool. If you choose to not use this program then you will need to pay whatever the going increase is at the time. We are bound to one year and the rate is based on the previous year's rate.

The motion on the table for the Primex CAP Program was called with all in favor of the motion.

Old Business

None

Selectmen Committee Reports

Cydney Johnson reported that the CIP Committee will be meeting tomorrow night.

Town Administrator Report by Liz Dionne

Fire Suppression

A few months ago, the Town Hall fire inspection report was addressed everything was fixed except for the Fire Suppression System for the Town Hall. This is a very costly project. We are not in violation as long as there is a plan in place such as the CIP. Quotes are currently being obtained, some have not come in yet, some have not even responded. One companies quote was provided for both the first and second floors individually. Next week Liz is appearing before the CIP Committee. A plan in good faith has been set in place to work towards sprinkling the building. Reuben Wentworth feels it should be a CIP issue; Phil agrees.

Rumble Strips

A report on the rumble strips has been received and provided to the Board. Liz has had a request from a resident for a copy of the report, which she has not given yet. She advised the resident that per RSA 91-A until it was given officially to the Board it would not be provided. I am sure that the resident will be contacting me again tomorrow. Phil Wittmann stated he assumed that this was their final ruling until the repaving in 2019 with no appeal process. He would like an appeal process investigated prior to and in the best interest of the residents that property values are being affected. Reuben Wentworth mentioned speaking with our State Reps voicing that they are our representatives and what are you going to do for us. Liz Dionne will investigate this matter and contact all parties concerned.

Approval of Minutes:

Reuben Wentworth made a motion to approve the minutes of Public Session I, September 6, 2017 and Cydney Johnson seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Reuben Wentworth made a motion to approve the minutes of Non-Public Session I, September 6, 2017 releasing #1 and Cydney Johnson seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Cydney Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes of Public Workshop Session, September 11, 2017 as presented and Reuben Wentworth seconded with all in favor of the motion.

Approval of Consent Agenda

None

Public Input II (limited to 5 minutes per person on any Governmental/Town Business)

None

Discretionary Action on Requests for Appointments (No discussion, majority vote required to allow/not allow appointment)

None

Non-Public Session:

Cydney Johnson made a motion to enter into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (c) and (a) and John Markland seconded. The Board was polled in the affirmative by roll call with all in favor of the motion.

Roll call vote:

Reuben Wentworth, yes
Philip V. Wittmann, yes
John Markland, yes
Cydney Johnson, yes

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary K. Jarvis

Mary K. Jarvis
Recording Secretary